

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4 and 6-19 are presently active in this case. Claims 1 and 16 are amended and Claims 18 and 19 are added by the present amendment.

Claim amendments find support in the specification as originally filed at least at Figures 5, 6A and 6B. New claims find support at least at page 11, lines 9-10. Thus, it is believed no new matter is added

This amendment is submitted in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.116, which after final rejection permits entering of amendments, canceling claims, complying with any requirement of form expressly set forth in a previous Office Action, or presenting rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal. It is therefore respectfully requested that the present amendment be entered under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 1 was objected to; Claims 1, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,940,126 to Kimura in view of Japanese Patent No. JP 07-184102 to Kazutomo et al. (herein “Kazutomo”); Claims 4, 6, 8, 14 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura and Kazutomo in view of European Patent EP 1 104 181 to Lee et al. (herein “Lee”); Claims 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura and Kazutomo in view of Lee and Japanese Patent No. JP 2000-004386 to Hirobumi et al. (herein “Hirobumi”); and Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura and Kazutomo in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,177,950 to Robb.

Initially, Applicants and Applicant’s representatives gratefully acknowledge the courtesy of a personal interview with Examiner Tran conducted on May 12, 2005. During the interview, differences between the claimed invention and references cited in the outstanding

Office Action were discussed. In particular, claim amendments were discussed to more clearly recite the claimed features and to distinguish the claims over the cited references. Comments and claim amendments discussed during the interview are reiterated below.

Regarding the objection to Claim 1, Claim 1 is amended to more clearly recite antecedent basis for the limitation identified in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that objection be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of Claims 1, 7, 9, 10, 13 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kimura in view of Kazutomo.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to an image pick-up apparatus that includes, *inter alia*, light region separating means provided between first and second light regions, optical means for changing a direction of travel and a lens mount for holding the optical means and having the first and second image forming lenses mounted directly thereto. The light region separating means is molded integrally with the lens mount as a single element. Amended Claim 16 includes similar features.

In a non-limiting example, Figure 5 shows a cross-sectional block diagram of an arrangement of a lens mount that includes a divider plate portion 501 (e.g., light separating means) that is integrally formed with a lens mount 1 that holds a prism 6 (e.g., optical means). Further, the lens mount has the first lens 202 and the second lens 201 (e.g., first and second image forming lenses) mounted directly to the lens mount 1. The divider plate portion 501 is molded integrally with the lens mount as a single element.

As discussed during the interview, the combined disclosures of Kimura and Kazutomo do not teach or suggest a light region separating means being molded integrally with a lens mount as a single element, where first and second image forming lenses are mounted directly to the lens mount. In Kazutomo in Figure 3, lenses 11 and 12 are not mounted directly to a lens mount that is molded integrally with a light region separating means. Instead, Kazutomo in

Figure 3 shows a light region divider 41a that is connected to lens mounts 43 and 44. Lens mounts 43 and 44 are then respectively connected to lenses 11 and 12. Thus, Kazutomo only indicates that lenses are connected to lens mounts that are connected to a light region divider. Further, as noted in the outstanding Office Action, Kimura does not explicitly disclose that the light region separating means is molded integrally with the lens mount.¹ Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the combined disclosures of Kimura and Kazutomo do not teach or suggest “a lens mount for holding said optical means and having said first and second image forming lenses mounted directly thereto,” as recited in Claim 1 and as similarly recited in Claim 16.

Accordingly, Claims 1 and 16 are believed to patentably define over Kimura and Kazutomo.

In addition, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of Claims 4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15 and 17 as unpatentable over Kimura and Kazutomo in view of Lee, Hirobumi, or Robb. Claims 4, 6, 8, 11, 12, and 14 depend from Claim 1, and Claim 17 depends from Claim 16, and Claims 1 and 16 are believed to patentably define over Kimura and Kazutomo as discussed above. Further, none of Lee, Hirobumi or Robb teach or suggest the features lacking in the disclosures of Kimura and Kazutomo. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested those rejections be withdrawn.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1 and 16, and claims depending therefrom, are allowable.

¹ Office Action at page 3, line 21 to page 4, line 2.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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